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totally different structures, and the Mundurucú have changed the form and meaning of religious elements in such a way that they function within the structure of Mundurucú culture. 775 775

Although the Christian concept of the soul has main reference to the hereafter, the Mundurucú beliefs in the soul are more closely concerned with the here and now. The souls of people afflicted with a certain illness can wander abroad and constitute a threat to society. Also, the soul is highly vulnerable to theft by the game animals. And finally, the soul can be used as a means of obtaining omens and knowledge. 774 787

The souls of the dead remain permanently in the afterworld and are not thought to intervene thereafter in the affairs of the living except in one highly limited way. They are not believed to return to the world as ghosts nor are they regarded as a source of danger. But the soul of a living person may turn into an *uantaukuakat*, or wandering soul, during the course of a malady characterized by weakness, fever, and yellow skin. The person so afflicted is generally unaware of the journeys of his soul, but some are said to become *uantaukuakat* willingly and to remember the deeds of their wandering souls. The soul always travels at night and at these times attacks sleeping people. On occasion, it travels with other wandering souls and, thus strengthened and emboldened, may strike at persons who are awake and walking about. 775 774

The wandering soul is believed to be especially dangerous, for defense against it consists of purely temporary measures and there is no cure for sick people whose souls wander. The *uantaukuakat* can be driven away by the shaman, who spears it with a five-inch-long lance, but it always returns to the attack. It attacks children and robs their souls, and visits adults as a vampire that sucks the blood from its victims. Only the shaman can see wandering souls, although anybody can hear their footsteps at night. However, the soul travels about on a cord that stretches like a piece of rubber, and its footprints are never visible the next day.

After the sick person dies, the soul goes to an afterworld, and its nocturnal travels cease. People so afflicted are not killed, in spite of the danger to the community. The soul of a young woman of the village of Cabruá was known to wander at night, but no action was taken against her. The residents of the village were extremely nervous during the nights of her illness, and most hesitated even to speak of it. 775

The vampire aspect of the wandering soul is reminiscent of European folklore, and there exists here also the possibility that the Mundurucú borrowed the belief from their Brazilian neighbors. One Brazilian informant specifically stated that the people of the Tapajós River believed that the souls of some sick people journey at night as vampires, although they do not travel on magical elastic cords. Borrowing in this instance appears obvious, although it is not certain just who borrowed from whom. It is possible in all these examples that the transmission of the themes is extremely complex. The Mundurucú may well have received this concept from the whites but through the intermediary of another Indian tribe 774 177

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part of its trip, the soul travels with the coatá monkey. This animal traverses one section of its passage by bending an assaí palm over, grabbing its branches, and then letting it fling him into the foliage of another tree as it springs back. If the soul is not careful, it falls to the ground, killing its sick owner. The only dangerous part of the journeys with various species of fish, except for the invariably fatal end of the trip, is with the black piranha, which tries to eat the soul.

The concept of soul loss, like the belief in spirit mothers of game animals with which it is associated, is widespread among both Indian and rural Brazilian inhabitants of the Amazon region. Especially interesting because of its similarity to the Mundurucú belief is Wagley's report that the Brazilian population of the community of Ita believes that the mãe de bicho punishes humans by stealing their "shadows."[12]

Although the departure of the soul from a living body is generally an occasion of great danger, there are some circumstances under which it is considered desirable and beneficial. The souls of shamans frequently travel abroad and are able to visit the underworlds of the *kokeriwat* and the afterworlds of the Mundurucú. Shamans visit the afterworld of the game, (where they serve as shamans to the animals), and that of the trumpets, but they do not visit the Land of the *Yurupari*. The wounded warrior was believed to acquire temporary shamanistic powers during the period of his incapacity, and his soul wandered abroad while he lay in his hammock and dreamed of its experiences. These travels were considered desirable, and care was taken to remove the penis sheath of the warrior to allow him to dream. The Mundurucú were unable to explain why the penis sheath inhibited dreams and the wandering of the soul.

The souls of sleeping people sometimes travel harmlessly abroad, and dreams are believed to be the experiences of the soul while away from the body. Dreams are not considered visions or prognostications of future events, but they are thought to be good or bad omens. Thus, if a man dreams of some frightening experience, he will not leave the village for a few days for fear of some unknown danger.

Certain people are able to derive knowledge from their dreams. These people, known as *cheseretaibitchanyen* (those who know how to explain dreams), derive their power through medication administered to them as children. The souls of Mundurucú of times long past appear to them in dreams and teach them certain songs that are sung during ceremonies. Significantly, the songs taught to dreamers are not new or forgotten ones, but songs that are quite actively present in Mundurucú culture and known by other dreamers.

All animals have souls, which return to the afterworld of the game and become transformed into people upon the death of the animal. Fish are also thought to have souls, but they are accorded little importance in Mundurucú thought. Although individual fish and animals have souls, only species of domesticated plants have souls. Dogs, too, are thought to have souls, but the canine soul returns to the Land of the Dogs upon the death of its body. Also, dogs are not considered to be

[12] Wagley, 1953, p. 235.

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to the men's house rolled in leaves and then slowly toasted and dried out over a fire. Tobacco smoke is blown upon it, and sweet manioc broth is occasionally poured upon it to please and feed it. The dried fetus is believed to become transformed in time into a baby tapir containing the mother of the tapir, and the shaman places it near one of the pools at the headwaters of the streams. Even weaker shamans can make the *biu ši*, and any pregnant tapir serves this purpose.

Although the manufacture of a *biu ši* was never witnessed during our residence among the Mundurucú, I was able to observe the preparation of a mother of the peccary in the savannah village of Cabruá. On this day, the hunters had chased a band of peccary that had passed close to the village. The band, however, had a fair head start on the hunters and escaped, leaving a half-grown member behind. The dogs cornered the animal in a bush, and the hunters were about to capture it as a pet when the shaman arrived on the scene. He ordered the men and their dogs to stand back while he smoked intently and concentrated his gaze upon the animal. He then announced that the young peccary was carrying the mother of the peccary, or *daje ši*, within its body. As the news spread, all the villagers came out to gaze upon the animal and to admire its "beauty," evidently seeking thereby to gratify the spirit. The shaman then grabbed the squealing peccary and sat upon it, while another shaman secured it by its snout. A third shaman pulled out the animal's eyebrows and some hair from its back and released it unharmed. The first shaman then brought the hairs back to the trumpet chamber adjoining the men's house and placed them inside the hollow limb of a buritĺ palm. Every day thereafter he blew smoke upon his creation and poured a sweet manioc drink over it. After a period of this treatment it was believed that the hairs would turn into a young peccary with the mother of the peccary inside it. The animal would similarly be carried to one of the deep pools in the neighborhood and would attract herds of peccary. Strong shamans, it was believed, could make the *daje ši* from the hairs of any peccary, but weaker practitioners, as in this instance, had to select an animal that already had a *daje ši* within it.

Other Functions of the Shaman

In addition to his curing activities and his role in the propitiation of the spirit mothers, the shaman performs a variety of lesser duties. When the village is moved to a new locale every ten years or so, the shaman must inspect the site selected. He ascertains if there are many fever-producing *cauši* in the neighborhood, and he looks also for signs of the *Yurupari* and other malignant beings. These malevolent forces can also exist below the surface of the ground, and the shaman must send his *naneh* to inspect the earth below the proposed village site. After the instrument has completed its investigation, it returns to the shaman and tells him of its discoveries.

The shaman, through another of his instruments, the *ibōbōt*, can also discover lost persons and lost or stolen objects. He blows smoke upon the *ibōbōt*—a small piece of cane—and sends it upon its mission. In the case of a stolen object,* the

*Theft is extremely rare among the Mundurucú and probably owes its occasional occurrence to the contemporary acquisition of trade goods.

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instrument follows the thief's tracks and then comes back and reveals his identity and location to the shaman. If the object is merely lost, the *iböböt* searches for it and then informs the shaman where it is to be found.

Hunters occasionally lose their way in the forest, and their relatives immediately resort to the shaman to find them. The shaman's instrument locates the lost person and then returns to tell the shaman whether he is alive and homeward bound on the proper trail. If the person is still wandering aimlessly, the *iböböt* frequently nudges him in the right direction or enters his body and leads him home. Only the shaman can hear the voice of the *iböböt;* his dialogues with the instrument are inaudible to others.

One informant reported that in the old days the most powerful shamans of the tribe were able to turn people temporarily into animals. The Mundurucú in those times performed a ceremony called the *Duparíp,* which took place over a three-year period. As a part of this ceremony, the three most powerful shamans participating allowed their hair to grow to their shoulders and were believed able to turn the bizorro, an insect, into the tapir and men into the tapir or deer. Nobody was able to see them perform these acts; the transformed men simply disappeared. It was considered extremely dangerous to be thus selected by these powerful shamans, because the men, in the guise of tapirs and deer, were frequently chased by the dogs and could be killed. However, the shamans recognized the slain animals as their own creations and proceeded to change them back to men. They took out the heart and blood, placing them on the ground and covering the pile with leaves, and then blew tobacco smoke upon it and stamped upon the ground; the man emerged from under the leaves alive and intact. It is said that men who had undergone this experience were considered especially sacrosanct because of their former membership in the animal world, and their presence was especially valued at the ceremonies connected with the animal spirits.

Shamans possessing the power to assume this special ceremonial role were always married to equally strong female shamans. These women were able to transform other women into animals during the *Duparíp* ceremony and are said to have been capable of transforming a Brazil-nut husk with a length of vine inside it into a cutia.

Finally, some shamans engage in the practice of making a woman into a *yapö,* or wanton. No respectable shaman would perform such an act, however, and those who use their powers for such disreputable ends are called *mamú keren,* or bad or foolish shamans. Reprehensible though this may be to the Mundurucú, the *mamú keren* is not to be classed with the *ibökaipat,* or sorcerer, who is believed to be a dire threat to society. He causes disease and death, whereas the *mamú keren* merely converts women into nymphomaniacs, a practice that is rather ambivalently considered both disgraceful and highly amusing by the Mundurucú men.

The *yapö* indiscriminately copulates with all men who desire her. Characteristically, she does not smile modestly in the presence of the men, but grins and laughs